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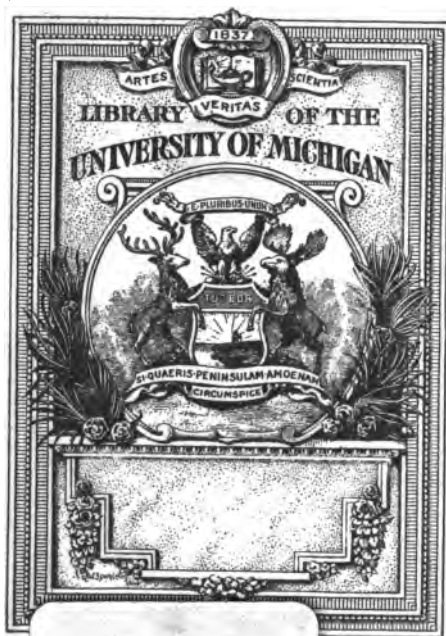
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BY
WARREN HOLDEN.



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CONTENTS.

- I. SUNRISE.
- II. HERE.
- III. LOVE'S AWAKENING.
- IV. NOW.
- V. ART-OWNERSHIP.
- VI. "QUID TIMES? CÆSAREM VEHI8."
- VII. THE VIOLIN.
- VIII. UNREST.
- IX. THE VILLAGE CHURCH.
- X. HOPE.
- XI. THANKSGIVING.
- XII. TO WHOM BELONGS BEAUTY?
- XIII. "THE WIND BLOWETH WHERE IT LISTETH."
- XIV. SUNSET.

I.

SUNRISE.

THE cheerful cock foretells the coming day :
The stars burn dim as one by one they die,
While gradual dawn creeps up the Eastern sky,
And rosy blushes tinge the sober gray.
At once the golden splendor bursts its way,
Unfurls its flaming banner flashing high,
And rallies friend and foe that sleeping lie,
To join again in life's returning fray.
O sun of Love Divine, in glory rise :
Dispel the dreams that haunt our dreary night.
With healing touch restore our blinded eyes,
That we may see the light within Thy light ;
And by Thy wisdom rendered truly wise,
Transcending faith, may walk henceforth by sight.

II.

HERE.

DISLOYAL scorner of his native land,
Th' inconstant traveller, with roaming eyes,
Explores the earth to find, 'neath foreign skies,
Conditions happier than near at hand.
He dreams a paradise on distant strand,
Where he, good fortune's heir, expects a prize.
What marvel then if thoughtless youth despise
The plain realities that round him stand.
The true Utopia is only found
Where master-minds their destinies create,
And through endurance prove them doubly dear.
The place whereon we stand is holy ground.
The nearest duty weaves the web of fate.
Reward and work are one ; and heaven is here.

III.

LOVE'S AWAKENING.

•
O SWEET surprise! Thou image of my dream,
Fair maiden, seen by only passing glance,
Yet shrined in memory, like saintly trance,
Revealing heaven through but a single gleam!
No fleeting phantom cast that dazzling beam:
A living presence thou didst timely chance
'Twixt real and ideal world's romance,
And hope's unbounded promises redeem.
Rare angel guest hath blest me unawares,
And chosen friends have cheered life's lengthening way;
Besides my other self, love's counterpart.
But thou didst kindle love's delightful cares.
Though threescore years conspire to hide that day,
Thou'rt still the key that first unlocked my heart.

IV.
NOW.

THE Past is dead. Let Lethe's waters close
Above its vain regrets, a brood of care.
The ghosts of joys departed haunt the air
With discontent; and mar the heart's repose.
The false mirage of hope at distance glows,
Alluring voyageur with promise fair,
That oft misleads his soul to fatal snare.
The Future mortal seer but dimly knows.
Incessant battle must the Present wage,
Unswerved by hope, that dazzles to betray,
Or sad-eyed memory mourning broken vow.
Well-balanced manhood treads the world's grand stage,
And plays its realistic parts to-day.
The life that lives is one eternal Now.

V.

ART-OWNERSHIP.

CREATIONS of High Art adorn the land:

Her handmaid, heaven-born genius, finding joy

In self-appointed tasks the days employ.

All thanks to Patronage with open hand.

If artist seem to work at its command,

Becomes art-treasure thence its private toy,

To hide at pleasure or through whim destroy,

While cultivated taste may longing stand?

Exclusiveness is kin to miser's lust.

The true custodian, with princely grace,

Displays his gems of art to all mankind.

A faithful steward, he but holds in trust,

For common use, the heirlooms of the race.

Art-ownership is vested in the mind.

VI.

“QUID TIMES? CÆSAREM VEHIS.”

THE waves ran high along the stormy strait:

The anxious boatman strained each nerve to steer
The fragile skiff through dangers crowding near,
While Cæsar calm revolved the cares of state.

Whom destiny had fashioned to be great,

The world-wide conqueror, deriding fear,
Rebuked the timid oarsman with a sneer:

“What fearest, bearing Cæsar, ward of fate?”

While Jesus slept, uprose the water-wraith.

Alarmed they woke him. “Peace, be still,” he said.

The winds and sea obeyed the potent spell.

“Why are ye fearful, ye of little faith?

Where I am can be naught of harm to dread.”

Safe fares the heart where God is pleased to dwell.

VII.

THE VIOLIN.

THE Heart's Own Voice, sweet viol, be thy name,
Whose throbbing chords are tuned to every tone
Of passion's scale to human bosom known.
Dost thou discourse of love? The lover's frame
Responsive trembles and reveals the flame.
Is grief thy theme? What sympathy is shown
On every face! Mayhap there bursts a moan.
Thy gentle chiding wakens conscious blame.
Spontaneous pleasure leads the nimble dance
Where'er thy wizard wand a challenge flings,
'Neath stately roof or green-wood tree perchance.
And when repentance wavers o'er the strings
Their pleading prayers the contrite heart entrance,
And waft it heavenward as on angel wings.

VIII.
UNREST.

WHENCE cometh discontent? Let fortune's Guest,
When tired of ease, ambition's part assume;
On honor's field then let him cull the bloom,
While friendship lends good luck a keener zest.
And yet his bosom hides a vague unrest.
The one thing wanting seems afar to loom.
With Tantalus he shares a tedious doom,
Pursuing ever some elusive quest.
Wouldst thou absorb the Universal Soul?
Must Life Divine thy private drama play?
Confined to narrow selfhood's petty role,
It chafes and wears the weary heart away.
Give life free course. Give love entire control.
Give all thou hast. Good measure God will pay.

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IX.

THE VILLAGE CHURCH.

To all the country-side a landmark fair
 Outstands the church upon the village green.
 Its "heaven-pointing finger" far is seen,
 To beckon man away from worldly care.
Life's dearest hopes and fears assemble there :
 Repentance, led by Faith to Peace serene,
 If sacrilegious Self step not between ;
 And Love, thrice hallowed in the house of prayer.
But doth the visible church content thy choice ?
 And serves its altar as salvation's mart ?
 Or dwelleth safety with its countless host ?
The Spirit's message comes in still small voice,
 Which saith : God's kingdom is within the heart.
 Ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost.



X.

HOPE.

ILLUSIVE hope, though oft deceived by thee,
The heart still clings and will not let thee go,
Last specious anchor left in stress of woe,
When tossed about on life's tempestuous sea.
Adroit deceiver, yet beguiling me,
Thy willing dupe, I cannot count thee foe,
While mid the raging battle's frantic thrøe
Thy flag still glimmers, faint perhaps, yet free.
Thus are we lured along the doubtful way
By fitful confidence in promise bright
Of hope's fair star, whose intermittent ray
Now leaves us groping in the murky night;
Until it melts into eternal day,
When we may walk in heaven's transcendent light.

XI.

THANKSGIVING.

To God, the Giver, thanks for all He wills.
His hand hath planted us on kindly soil,
Which teeming harvest yields to honest toil,
And many a spacious barn with plenty fills.
His are the cattle on a thousand hills.
He bids us freely share the countless spoil;
Whilst bursting presses flow with wine and oil,
And industry swift turns her busy mills.
But thank Him most for mind, through culture free
To scan His large designs and share His thought;
And worship more with heart than bended knee.
By neither fear nor favor weakly wrought,
Yet quick the claims of brotherhood to see,
The man will dare to do the thing he ought.

XII.

TO WHOM BELONGS BEAUTY?

'Tis mine, wherever beauty shows its face :
Not mine to handle with familiar hands ;
Not captive held by lover's selfish bands
To be caressed with foolish fond embrace.
But, like a delicately chiselled vase,
'Tis mine to worship where apart it stands,
In chaste obedience to His pure commands,
Who owns all souls and clothes them with His grace.
Not thine the charms thy form doth represent.
Thou'rt but the clay that's shaped by artist's skill.
"The beauty of the Lord" to thee is lent.
Then wear thine honors meekly at His will.
To serve as beauty's shadow be content,
Till beauty's substance—love—thy being fill.

XIII.

“THE WIND BLOWETH WHERE IT LISTETH.”

YE whirlwinds, ministers of heaven's wrath,
Which scour the earth in terrible forray,
Like roaring lions seeking after prey,
Ye scatter desolation on your path.
Sweet breath of western breeze, thy perfumed bath
Revives the pilgrim fainting by the way,
Inspiring soft repose at close of day,
And waking hope of life's calm after-math.
Ye passion-storms that seize us unawares,
And drive us—slaves, to work your wicked will,
O cease from troubling while the weary rest.
Peace-breathing Spirit, blending with our prayers,
Thy tranquil voice, in whisper small and still,
Foretells the quiet Sabbath of the blest.

XIV.

SUNSET.

WHILE wending home in sunset's golden blaze,
The western splendor lures each wistful eye
To pay due homage to the gorgeous sky.
What rapture bursts in sudden words of praise,
Or burns more eloquent in silent gaze!
For one brief moment heaven draweth nigh.
It fades away; and with a parting sigh,
We go, in musing mood, our several ways.
Entrancing vision, whence thy fleeting sheen,
Returning oft at twilight's witching hour?
Art thou the bright mirage of fairy-land?
In dreams transported to that magic scene,
Of rosy walk and paradisal bower,
Enchanted lovers wander hand in hand.

